

DBC NEWS

A news update from the **D**achshund **B**reed **C**ouncil

January 2009

Revised Breed Standard

The Kennel Club issued a revised Breed Standard for Dachshunds to come into effect from 1st January 2009 as an “interim” Standard, allowing for consultation until June 2009.

The changes to our Breed Standard are based on recommendations made by the Breed Council's Health and Welfare Sub-committee who worked with several experienced breeders to identify changes that would both clarify the existing Standard and address potential health and welfare issues.

We have published a guide to the revised Breed Standard on our website. It should be read in conjunction with Sayer's Illustrated Standard of Points of the Dachshund, available from The Dachshund Club. Further information will be included in updated educational materials which the Breed Council will issue later this year.

IVDD Guide

The Breed Council has co-operated with www.dodgerslist.com to produce a simple Guide to Intervertebral Disc Disease (IVDD – back problems) for UK owners. Dodgerslist is a website & e-mail list group offering education and support for owners and all dogs suffering from disc disease. The leaflet includes basic advice on avoiding back injuries, how to spot the symptoms and an overview of the options available: surgical and non-surgical.

Download the guide from our website.
www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk

KC Health Plans

Our major task in December was to prepare a response to the information sent by the Kennel Club on health issues affecting Dachshunds. This will form the basis of their proposed Health Plans.

The KC provided information from the 2005 Health Survey, a scientific literature survey and data from Agria Pet Insurance.

The results of the Purebred Dog Health Survey for Dachshunds did not break results down into individual varieties of Dachshund, so with data on only about 750 dogs (compared with more than 5000 registered each year, they have to be used with caution.

The insurance data showed Spinal Problems (IVDD) are the most important condition and the only ones of significance in this set of information. The other high rates of insurance claims were for Gastroenteritis (likely to be due to having eaten something “unsuitable”!) and Traumatic Wound / Injury (likely to be due to road traffic accidents).

Many of the conditions listed in the Scientific Literature Survey are not recognised by, nor known to, most Dachshund breeders in the UK. We do not

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disagree that this information has appeared in scientific literature, but the data provide us with no indication of the prevalence or severity of any of the conditions referred to. Rather oddly, this set of data did not include PRA in MLHDs or MSHDs.

Our response summarised the key areas of work currently being undertaken by the Breed Council, which include:

- IVDD
- PRA (incl. Cord1)
- Epilepsy (incl. Lafora's)

APGAW

The Associate Parliamentary Group on Animal Welfare has launched a consultation exercise into “the welfare of pedigree dogs”. The Breed Council has submitted a response, which is summarised below:

We believe the APGAW Working Group should include in its Terms of Reference the welfare issues of all dogs, not just pedigree dogs.

The RSPCA's website highlights its two canine welfare campaigns: “Puppy Trafficking” and “Greyhounds”. We believe these two campaigns clearly identify the priorities APGAW should address.

Those of us involved in KC Registered Breed Clubs and showing pedigree dogs could not, in any sense, be considered to be part of “an industry” where, presumably, the primary motivation is to make money. Given the RSPCA's priority campaign on Puppy Trafficking we suggest that is “the industry” which needs to be addressed in order to ensure better standards of health and welfare for dogs.

Any proposed minimum set of standards (e.g. the principles of the Accredited Breeder Scheme) that APGAW might recommend should be made compulsory so that all breeders of pedigree and non- pedigree puppies would be required to comply.

We are unable to quantify the number of breeders or dogs falling within the Puppy Farmer/Pet Shop industry, since the majority,

we believe, may not be registered at the Kennel Club.

From our analysis of 2007-08 KC Litter Registrations in Miniature Smooth-haired Dachshunds, only 16% of litters were bred by people involved in showing their dogs. For Miniature Long-haired Dachshunds this figure is 29%. Only 12% of Miniature Smooth-haired puppies registered by the KC in 2007-08 were bred by exhibitors. Therefore, the argument that the Dog Showing breeder community is responsible for the ill-health of pedigree dogs has no basis in fact for Dachshunds. We have no reason to believe the figures would be significantly different in other popular breeds.

We believe there is a strong argument that all dogs should have some form of permanent identification.

The Dachshund Breed Clubs regularly run seminars to help breeders/judges/exhibitors understand the Breed Standard and to be aware of the health aspects of what makes a “good” Dachshund. The Kennel Club's phrase “Fit for Function, Fit for Life” is at the heart of these educational events.

The Show community (exhibitors and judges) is fully aware of the importance of health of our Dachshunds. This cannot be said to be true for many other breeders who are not Breed Club members, involved in showing or other KC licensed activities.

Code of Ethics

The KC has now approved the Breed Council's proposed additions to their mandatory Code of Ethics. These additions are now available for all Clubs to use and they make specific requirements related to the health and welfare of Dachshunds. Club membership will be conditional on agreement to the full (KC + Club) Code of Ethics. Details will be published by each Club and on the Breed Council Website.

Form more information, visit:

[Www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk](http://www.dachshundbreedcouncil.org.uk)